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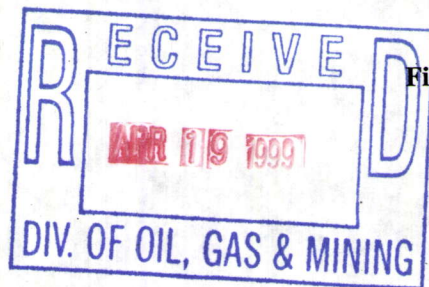


United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Ashley  
National  
Forest

Vernal Ranger District  
355 North Vernal Ave.  
Vernal, UT 84078



File Code: 1950/2800

Date: April 16, 1999

Dear Friends of the Ashley:

I have enclosed the decision for the proposal to authorize Deseret Generation and Transmission to remove 3,000 tons of limestone from the existing pit located near the Diamond Mountain Road in Uintah County. If you have any questions about my decision please contact me or Chauncie Todd at (435) 789-1181.

Thank you for your interest and participation in the management of the Ashley National Forest.

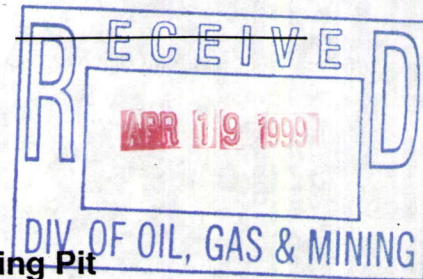
Sincerely,

BRAD EXTON  
District Ranger

enclosure







## **DECISION MEMO**

### **Short-term Removal of Limestone from Existing Pit**

Vernal Ranger District  
Ashley National Forest  
Uintah County, Utah

I have decided to authorize Deseret Generation and Transmission (DG&T) to remove 3,000 tons of limestone from the existing pit located near the Diamond Mountain Road in Uintah County. The legal description is T1S, R22E, Sec. 21-22, Salt Lake Meridian.

This decision includes:

- Providing access to the pit by reopening the 3/4 mile access road from FDR 048 to the mine site. The 3/4 mile of road was pioneered in 1997 when DG&T drove equipment on an approved overland route to remove limestone samples.
- Allowing the removal of 3,000 tons of limestone from the existing pit. The limestone to be removed will occupy an area approximately 80 feet long by 80 feet wide and 15 feet deep. It is scheduled to be removed during May and June, 1999, using bulldozers and dump trucks.
- Closing the road by ripping and seeding after the limestone is removed. The closure may not occur if a decision is made on the DG&T Minerals Plan of Operations Environmental Assessment which would require long-term use of the road.

The purpose and need for this project is to provide a short-term supply of limestone to the Bonanza Power Plant for use in its stack scrubbers.

This decision should not be confused with the upcoming decision for the long-term mining proposal analyzed in the DG&T Minerals Plan of Operations Environmental Assessment. This decision does not obligate the Forest Service or set any precedent or preference for the long-term mining proposal. The long-term mining proposal is being considered on its own merits and environmental effects.

The Ashley National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan has been reviewed. The project is in management area "f" (Forest Plan pages IV 7-8 & IV 94) where dispersed recreation in a roaded environment is emphasized. There are no restrictions on mineral activities other than those general controls listed as standards and guidelines (pages IV 14-55). A review of the standards and guidelines showed this project is consistent with the Forest Plan.





Public involvement included: a legal notice published in the Vernal Express on March 24, 1999; project listed in the April-June 1999 Ashley National Forest Guide to Public Involvement Opportunities; and a scoping document mailed to individuals, organizations, and government entities known to be interested or thought to be potentially affected by the action. One favorable verbal comment was received.

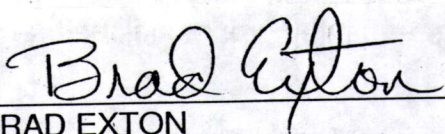
Based on public involvement, environmental analysis for the limestone sample removed from this site in 1997 (Decision Memo dated July 28, 1997), and past experience, the removal of the limestone does not appear to involve any extraordinary circumstances and would have only minor, localized effects on physical and biological components of the environment. Floodplains, wetlands, prime lands, threatened and endangered species, other minerals, wildlife, fisheries, and cultural resources have been considered, and none of these components would be adversely affected. The project area is not within a roadless area, access to the site is by an existing road, is not in a roadless area, and is not affected by the Forest Service Road Moratorium.

No issues within the scope of this proposal or extraordinary circumstances were identified during the scoping process. Therefore, this action falls within Category 3 [Approval of minor special-uses (FSH 1909.15, Section 31.2)] and is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment.

This decision may be implemented immediately.

This decision is not subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR Part 215.8 (a) (4).

For further information, contact Chauncie Todd at 355 North Vernal Avenue, Vernal, Utah 84078; telephone number (435) 789-1181.

  
BRAD EXTON  
District Ranger

Date 4/16/99